

REMARKS

The above Amendments and following remarks are responsive to all the points of rejection raised by the Examiner in the Office Action dated April 10, 2003. Claims 1-9 are currently pending in the application. Upon entry of this Amendment, claim 1 will have been amended and claims 8 and 9 will have been added. No new matter has been introduced by this Amendment. Entry and consideration of this Amendment are respectfully requested.

Response To Rejections Under § 102:

In the Office Action, claims 1-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Sato (U.S. Patent No. 5,816,680, hereafter Sato). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections for the following reasons.

The present invention teaches an auxiliary area 212 of a mirror 21 that includes a plurality of reflective sub-areas 2121-2124 that are obliquely oriented with respect to each other. To this end, the two sub zones 2121-2124 are able to reflect light along two different directions and with different distributions. These are features not believed to be disclosed by Sato. Support for this claim change can be found on page 6, lines 9-15 of the specification.

Sato is directed to a vehicular lamp having an improved external appearance that includes a plurality of small reflective surfaces formed in a step-like manner (see Abstract). More specifically, the small reflective surfaces 26A1 through 26A5 as well as 26B1 and 26B2 are formed as a plurality of paraboloids, which have the same axes as the reflective surface 18 as well as the same foci. Thus, the light reflected by the reflective surfaces 18, 26A1-26A5, 26B1, 26B2 is radiated parallel and toward the front of the reflector 16 (col. 6, lines 35-44). Therefore,

the small reflective surfaces described in Sato could not be viewed as oblique because of the step-like formation of the surfaces. Moreover, the light reflected by these surfaces would not be reflected in different directions or with different divergences, but instead would be reflected in the same direction or in parallel.

Conversely, in the present invention, the auxiliary area 212 of the mirror 21 includes several sub-areas 2121 through 2124, which are formed to reflect light in different directions (preferably all oblique) and with different divergences (see also Fig. 2). Thus, the effect achieved by the reflective surfaces is quite different than that in Sato. The additional reflective surfaces are oblique in comparison with the main reflection axis. In other words, the auxiliary axis x'-x' is different from the principal axis x-x. This design is advantageous when the rear lamp is very deep or when the outer lens of the rear lamp is highly bent because the light added by the additional reflective surfaces can "complete" the main light beam reflected by the main reflective surface in an angular point of view.

Accordingly, claims 1, 8 and 9 are now believed to be distinguishable over Sato. Likewise, claims 2-7 are also believed to be distinguishable over Sato based on their dependency on claim 1.

CONCLUSIONS

In view of the above amendments and arguments, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record, and are now in condition for allowance.

AUTHORIZATIONS

The Amendment is being timely filed. No fee is believed due. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this filing to Deposit Account No. 13-4503, Order No. 1948-4758. Likewise, any overpayment is credited to Deposit Account No. 13-4503, Order No. 1948-4758.

Respectfully submitted,
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